NEBEL T – UPDATED FOR TOC:

1NC shell:

A. interpretation: **NEBEL**[[1]](#footnote-1) interprets the resolution as: I think the best way of motivating this view is by example. So I’m going to look at the wording of the living wage resolution with an eye to what kinds of things, if any, the affirmative may legitimately specify. I believe that the affirmative may not specify a particular government or set of governments, but may perhaps specify a particular way of requiring employers to pay a living wage. In this post, I’ll focus on “just governments.”

[You must be willing to alter your advocacy to all countries if asked in CX to meet my interp]

B. Violation:

C. Standards.

1. precision - if the resolution should be interpreted a generic statement, then the T shell is correct. **NEBEL (2):** Some noun phrases include articles like “the,” demonstratives like “these,” possessives like “my,” or quantifiers like “some” or “all.” These words are called determiners. *Bare* plurals, including “just governments,” lack determiners. There’s no article, demonstrative, possessive, or quantifier in front of the noun to tell you how many or which governments are being discussed. We use bare plurals for two main purposes. Consider some examples: 1) Debaters are here. 2) Debaters are smart. In (1), “debaters” seems equivalent to “some debaters.” It is true just in case there is more than one debater around. If I enter a restaurant and utter (1), I speak truly if there are a couple of debaters at a table. This is an *existential* use of the bare plural, because it just says that there exist things of the relevant class (debaters) that meet the relevant description (being here). In (2), though, “debaters” seems to refer to debaters in general. This use of the bare plural is *generic*. Some say that generics refer to kinds of things, rather than particular members of their kinds, or that they refer to typical cases. There is a large literature on understanding generics. Here my aim is not to figure out the truth conditions for the generic reading of the resolution; I shall simply work with our pre-theoretical grip on the contrast between sentences like (1) and (2). This distinction bears importantly on the resolution. If “just governments” is a generic bare plural, then the debate is about whether just governments in general ought to require that employers pay a living wage. If it is an existential bare plural, then the debate is about whether some just governments—i.e., more than one—ought to require that employers pay a living wage. Only the second interpretation allows one to affirm by specifying a few governments.

Two warrants for this interpretation:

**First,** the phrase “ought to require” does not have any temporal features and accords with common usage. **NEBEL (3)** explains the argument**:** To my ear, the generic reading is correct. I think the best evidence for this is simply the undistorted judgments of ordinary speakers. No competent speaker of English would, without distorting influence or additional evidence of generalizability, endorse an inference from a plan involving two just governments to the resolution. Suppose Sally, an American citizen, believes that the U.S. and Canada should require employers to pay a living wage, but that no other government (just or unjust, actual or possible) should. She would not represent her view by asserting, “Just governments ought to require that employers pay a living wage.” She would deny this claim and hold that the U.S. and Canada are exceptions.

One might object that Sally would endorse this assertion if she believed that the U.S. and Canada are the only just governments. Maybe she would, but that is explained by the generic reading, because she would then be making a generalization about (what she believes to be) just governments. And the onus would be on the affirmative, when specifying particular governments, to add such a premise. Moreover, many linguists would add that Sally could not regard it is as mere accident that these governments are just and that they ought to require employers to pay a living wage: the resolution requires there to be some explanatory connection between the justness of governments and the living wage requirement (see Carlson 2005).

Some speakers might balk at the generic reading of the resolution. How, they might think, could anyone assent to such a sweeping claim about what just governments ought to do? It seems to depend heavily on the details of each country. I can easily get into this frame of mind. But, equipped with this frame of mind, it’s not as if I would assent to, “Just governments ought to require that employers pay a living wage,” and expect my audience to pick up on the existential reading. I would instead either deny the resolution or suspend judgment about it. This means that the anti-generalization view is not evidence of an eligible existential interpretation; rather, it’s a reason not to affirm the resolution. One more argument for affirmatives to answer! Consider an analogy. Suppose I say, “Dogs are ugly.” You might think it’s silly to say of dogs in general that they are ugly: how could one support such a generalization about the aesthetics of dogs? So you’ll reject my statement. You won’t reinterpret it to mean that *some* dogs are ugly and agree with it. I’m sure that many readers will be skeptical of directly appealing to how we ordinarily speak and think. Let me mention a more theoretical explanation of why the resolution is generic. Carlson (1977) suggests that the reading of bare plurals depends on the predicate of the sentence. He distinguishes between highly temporary *stage-level* predicates like “being here” or “being available,” and more intrinsic *individual-level* predicates like “having four legs” or “being altruistic.” He calls the former stage-level because they express properties of temporary stages of things: for example, *sitting* is a property of the present stage of Jake. One might argue that “ought to require” is an individual-level predicate: if just governments have an obligation to require that employers pay a living wage, that is not just a fleeting property of temporary government-stages. I mention this argument just as an illustration of how one might support the intuition with a theory, but I do not endorse the argument. We can turn next to a less direct argument for the generic reading of “just governments.” But this argument may carry more weight in a T debate.

Precision is a precondition on T – even if your interp is more fair or educational, mine is the most accurate, otherwise we’d just debate organ donation. Means vote on jurisdiction independent of fairness and education- the judge can only vote for cases which affirm the res since the ballot asks who did the better debating in context of a resolution while they can still vote on an abusive neg strategy. Also key to fairness since I would more likely prep to engage accurate interpretations of the resolution. That comes first. **NEBEL (4):** This is good evidence because ordinary speakers have an implicit (but not infallible) mastery over the language in which the resolution is stated. The resolution is stated in English, not in some special debate-specific dialect of English. Facts of usage constrain interpretation. The existential interpretation is not even, as I see it, eligible. So its pragmatic benefits are irrelevant. Compare: I think it would be better if the resolution were, “It is not the case that just governments ought to …” But that’s not the resolution, so it’s not even an eligible interpretation in a T debate. (Here I assume a controversial view about whether pragmatic benefits can justify a semantically inadequate interpretation of the resolution. I cannot defend this view here, but I welcome questions and objections in the comments to be addressed in a later article.)

**Second,** my interp is the only way to set logical division of ground for discussion. **NEBEL (5):** One of the most trolly observations to make in a debate on this topic is that just governments do not exist. It strikes me as plausible that no actually existing government is just. But most debaters will rightly trust their linguistic intuitions (in this case, but not in others!) and assume that this point is irrelevant to the resolution. The question is: *why* is it irrelevant? If “just governments” gets an existential reading, then the point should be relevant. If there are no just governments, then it is not the case that there are some just governments that ought to require employers to pay a living wage. So the resolution is not true. Reading “just governments” as a generic bare plural, then, is key to avoiding the trolly observation as a knockdown negative argument (or a knockdown presumption trigger, if presupposition failure makes the resolution neither true nor false). One might object that not even the generic reading can avoid the problem. After all, if there are no just governments, then how could it be true that just governments *in general* ought to do anything? Some linguists have held that generics never presuppose the existence of the kind of thing in question. But others, such as von Fintel (1996) and Greenberg (2003), have endorsed a more modest point, which is still enough for my purposes. This point starts with the fact that the resolution states a rule—namely, that just governments require employers to pay a living wage. Consider the rule, Trespassers ought to be prosecuted. We can affirm this rule even if there are no trespassers. But consider next, Some trespassers ought to be prosecuted. This statement is not true if there are never any trespassers. The lesson is that *normative* generics do not presuppose the existence of members of the relevant kind. Since the resolution is a normative statement, it does not presuppose that there actually are any just governments. Note that my argument here is very different from the just-as-trolly response that many make against the trolly observation. This response is that if there are no just governments, then the resolution is vacuously true. This is defended on the grounds that “just governments” refers to *all* just governments, and that this universal generalization is vacuously true if there are no just governments. My argument differs from this trolly response because I claim that “just governments” is generic, rather than universal: generics, unlike universals, allow exceptions. The trolly response also rests on more controversial assumptions than my response: the word “all” in English, in many cases, presupposes the existence of the things in question. And although there is no existence presupposition when the universal generalization states a rule—e.g., that all trespassers be prosecuted—the absence of trespassers does not make the rule vacuously true: it would not imply, for example, that all trespassers should be shot. More generally, we can’t assume that the English “all” is governed by the same rules as the universal quantifier in an ideal logical language.

That’s key to fairness and education by ensuring we can substantively engage in the topic with a stable basis for understanding its meaning. Prefer this interp of the topic – if just government was a normative aspiration, then the word “just” would be unneeded – “governments ought” would be equivalent.

D. Voter:

extension [grammar first]:

Extend Nebel – precision comes first since usage of language is a side constraint on legitimacy of T interps – and otherwise we could debate another topic or a blatantly ungrammatical view of the res. We understand the meaning of the res only within the context of English. This comes prior to issues of fairness and education and o/w since it’s is specific to the function of T in rounds – your responses are based on a conflation. You only justify changing the topic or it being bad that the res was this one, not your CI, which means you have no offense. **NEBEL[[2]](#footnote-2):** One reason why LDers may be suspicious of my view is because they see topicality as just another theory argument. But unlike other theory arguments, topicality involves two “interpretations.” The first is an interpretation, in the ordinary sense of the word, of the resolution or of some part of it. The second is a *rule*—namely, that the affirmative must defend the resolution.[2](http://vbriefly.com/2015/02/20/the-priority-of-resolutional-semantics-by-jake-nebel/#fn2) If we don’t distinguish between these two interpretations, then the negative’s view is merely that the affirmative must defend whatever proposition they think should be debated, not because it is the proposition expressed by the resolution, but rather because it would be good to debate. This failure to see what is distinctive about Topicality leads quickly to the pragmatic approach, by ignoring what the interpretation is supposed to be an interpretation *of*. By contrast, the topicality rule—i.e., that the affirmative must defend the resolution—justifies the semantic approach. This rule is justified by appeals to fairness and education: it would be unfair to expect the negative to prepare against anything other than the resolution, because that is the only mutually acceptable basis for preparation; the educational benefits that are unique to debate stem from clash focused on a proposition determined beforehand. The inference to the priority of semantic considerations is simple. Consider the following argument: We ought to debate the resolution. The resolution means X. Therefore, We ought to debate X. The first premise is just the topicality rule. The second premise is that X is the semantically correct interpretation. Pragmatic considerations for or against X do not, in themselves, support or deny this second premise. They might show that it would be better or worse *if* the resolution meant X, but sentences do not in general mean what it would be best for them to mean. At best, pragmatic considerations may show that we should debate some proposition other than the resolution. They are (if anything) reasons to *change* the topic, contrary to the topicality rule. Pragmatic considerations must, therefore, be weighed against the justifications for the topicality rule, *not* against the semantic considerations: they are objections to the first premise, not the second premise, in the argument above.

Nebel says I also control the internal link to fairness and education. And more reasons grammatical accuracy also controls the strongest internal link to fairness:

a) Internalizing a norm that debate is solely determined by pragmatic concerns like education or fairness would literally collapse the activity [especially key given your util fwk]. **NEBEL[[3]](#footnote-3):** One way admits that such pragmatic considerations are relevant—i.e., they are reasons to change the topic—but holds that they are outweighed by the reasons for the topicality rule. It would be better if everyone debated the resolution as worded, whatever it is, than if everyone debated whatever subtle variation on the resolution they favored. Affirmatives would unfairly abuse (and have already abused) the entitlement to choose their own unpredictable adventure, and negatives would respond (and have already responded) with strategies that are designed to avoid clash—including an essentially vigilantist approach to topicality in which debaters enforce their own pet resolutions on an arbitrary, round-by-round basis. Think here of the utilitarian case for internalizing rules against lying, murder, and other intuitively wrong acts. As the great utilitarian Henry Sidgwick argued, wellbeing is maximized not by everyone doing what they think maximizes wellbeing, but rather (in general) by people sticking to the rules of common sense morality. Otherwise, people are more likely to act on mistaken utility calculations and engage in self-serving violations of useful rules, thereby undermining social practices that promote wellbeing in the long run. That is exactly what happens if we reject the topicality rule in favor of direct appeals to pragmatic considerations. Sticking to a rule that applies regardless of the topic, of the debaters’ preferred variations on the topic, and of debaters’ familiarity with the national circuit’s flavor of the week, avoids these problems.

Answers back T interps that talk about pragmatic considerations e.g. ground, educational benefits like real world, or reciprocity, because even if its bad ground or education, you being allowed to change the topic is even worse.

b) It’s a jurisdiction question – so long as you believe the goal of T is to constrain debate to the topic, the pragmatic view fails. **NEBEL[[4]](#footnote-4):** Here is a third kind of response to the view that we should directly appeal to pragmatic considerations when evaluating topicality. This view justifies debating propositions that are completely irrelevant to the resolution but are much better to debate. Once you say that pragmatic benefits can justify debating a proposition that isn’t really what the resolution means, or that the resolution means whatever it would be best for it to mean, there is no principled way of requiring any particular threshold of similarity in order to be an eligible interpretation of the resolution. This means that the pragmatic approach justifies affirmatives that have nothing to do with the resolution. Of course some see no problem with non-topical affirmatives whose impacts outweigh the reasons to debate the resolution. But suppose you want a *principled* response to such strategies. You have one if you take seriously the idea that the debate should be about the resolution, and the idea that the proposition expressed by the resolution is independent of what proposition would be best to debate. Without a commitment to debating the proposition that the resolution actually means, I don’t think there is a principled response to such strategies, as I discuss below.

c) Pragmatic interpretations of topicality assume consent, which I do not give. I want us to debate the res as stated. **NEBEL[[5]](#footnote-5):** A second strategy denies that such pragmatic benefits are relevant. This strategy is more deontological. One version of this strategy appeals to the importance of consent or agreement. Suppose that you give your opponents prior notice that you’ll be affirming the September/October 2012 resolution instead of the current one. There is a sense in which your affirmation of that resolution is now predictable: your opponents know, or are in a position to know, what you will be defending. And suppose that the older resolution is conducive to better (i.e., more fair and more educational) debate. Still, it’s unfair of you to expect your opponents to follow suit. Why? Because they didn’t *agree* to debate that topic. They registered for a tournament whose invitation specified the current resolution, not the Sept/Oct 2012 resolution or a free-for-all. The “social contract” argument for topicality holds that accepting a tournament invitation constitutes implicit consent to debate the specified topic. This claim might be contested, depending on what constitutes implicit consent. What is less contestable is this: given that *some* proposition must be debated in each round and that the tournament has specified a resolution, no one can reasonably reject a principle that requires everyone to debate the announced resolution as worded. This appeals to Scanlon’s contractualism. Someone who wishes to debate only the announced resolution has a strong claim against changing the topic, and no one has a stronger claim against debating the announced resolution (ignoring, for now, some possible exceptions to be discussed in the next subsection). So it is unfair to expect your opponent to debate anything other than the announced resolution. This unfairness is a constraint on the pursuit of education or other goods: it wrongs and is unjustifiable to your opponent.

Outweighs your justifications – our agreement to engage in this topic is *at least* mutual, but the new quasi-topic you’re endorsing is definitely not. *Deontology means topicality comes first since we have both registered at the tournament promising to debate the topic-if you don’t defend the topic you are breaking your promise to the tournament directors which is a perfect duty since to break a promise is to will breaking it and the nonexistence of promises to begin with.*

AT pragmatic interps good [overall]:

1) the onus is on you to prove debate-speak is somehow different from normal English interpretation, and we have good evidence to think it’s not. **NEBEL[[6]](#footnote-6):** But even if Kupferbreg is right that debate is its own context, it does not follow that conduciveness to good debate determines what the resolution means. Kupferbreg appeals to the consensus of linguists that words can be ambiguous. That is obvious. But linguists require *evidence* of ambiguity before they accept that a word is ambiguous. That is why they posit empirical tests of ambiguity (Zwicky and Sadock 1975). Many linguists and philosophers of language are guided by the maxim, “Avoid multiplying senses beyond necessity.” A debater appealing to the technical context of debate would need empirical evidence that the expression has a debate-specific, technical meaning. Without this evidence, we should assume that the words in the resolution are used in their ordinary senses (or, in certain obvious cases, in the technical sense of some academic field). Moreover, it is unlikely that NSDA LD topic committee would use words in unconventional ways that could only be understood by application of debate-specific standards—especially standards that are used by a tiny minority of LD debaters, in the grand scheme of things.[13](http://vbriefly.com/2015/02/20/the-priority-of-resolutional-semantics-by-jake-nebel/#fn13) I don’t want to put too much weight on what the topic committee thinks, because I have no idea what they think, and different members probably think different things about resolutional interpretation. My point is just that the ambiguity hypothesis is, without much further evidence, just a hypothesis, and that it is*prima facie* unlikely that resolutions are written not in ordinary English but rather in some technical dialect of English which the vast majority of debaters and coaches (i.e., those who primarily compete on local circuits) do not speak.

The “example of the resolution” view of topicality fails as well if I win my semantic argument. **NEBEL[[7]](#footnote-7):** Perhaps I have misunderstood the parametric approach, by taking the resolution to be a boundary on the wrong sorts of objects. Let’s consider a different version of the parametric view. On this view, the resolution is a boundary on a set of *examples*. More specifically, these examples are agent-action pairs—e.g., the U.S. doing something, the UK doing something, etc., where “something” is a way in which that agent could require employers to pay a living wage. The affirmative may pick an example within that set as their advocacy, and the question of topicality is just which examples belong in the set. There is a problem with this view, however. It presupposes what I earlier called the *existential* interpretation of the topic. If the resolution said (or meant), “Some just governments ought to . . . ,” then it would be clearly permissible, if not obligatory, for the affirmative to specify a particular just government. But if the resolution’s “just governments” is instead a generic, then it’s unclear why it should be legitimate for the affirmative to specify a particular government. To see why this is suspicious, suppose that the resolution stated, “All just governments ought to . . . .” I hope everyone would agree that one couldn’t affirm by specifying a single government or even a few governments, *even if those are examples of just governments requiring employers to pay a living wage*. This is because universal generalizations are not affirmed by a single witnessing instance. Nor would it be persuasive to suggest that although the resolution is worded as a universal or generic generalization, we should ignore that feature because it is undesirable for debate. The same goes for generic generalizations. So it should be no more legitimate for the affirmative to specify a particular example on a generic resolution than it is on a universal one. At the very least, this is a reason why the version of the parametric approach under consideration cannot be applied to resolutions regardless of their wording: the resolution’s semantics comes first.

extension [division of ground first]:

The division of ground standard also o/w your offense to fairness and education since under your interp for advocacies to be topical, the countries must be just governments – but that means that the topicality of my advocacy would depend on the ethical framework that’s won, because that contextualizes what a just government is. Neither debater can form a coherent strategy since their understanding of framework would change whether they think their advocacy is topical. It could be that the aff’s framework and offense is won, but that might imply untopicality. Resolvability comes first under fairness since all theory args presume that the winner can be decided in the first place. Leads to ridiculous conclusions – if the aff proves that just governments should require living wage, the neg can claim the fact that the government has not provided one means it’s no longer just and you negate on T - the inherency would become a voting issue.

AT empirical ground:

1. turn: specifying a single country can avoid key ground by choosing an extreme with no disadvantages and irrefutable empirics, exploding aff ground and destroying any room for neg disads since there are 190+ countries. My limit is better – you can spec employers, just not location.

AT common usage:

turn: Many policy debate theorists have concluded that semantics takes lexical priority over pragmatic concerns – this view is a pretty well-developed norm. **NEBEL[[8]](#footnote-8):** My view probably seems obvious to some people and incoherent to others. Outsiders to national circuit LD may find it ridiculous that anyone would find it necessary to defend it at such length. But some circuit LDers may think that my view rests on a conceptual confusion about topicality. **Argumentation theorists**, however, **have defended the priority of semantics in the context of CEDA**(Murphy 1994), **NPDA** (Merrell 2015), **and NFA LD**(Diers 2010) debate. Why should the view be coherent in these contexts but not in high school LD? Or do these authors simply fail to understand what topicality means? I don’t think that either hypothesis is very credible.

**Murphy, Merrell, and Diers argue that pragmatic considerations are circular, unverifiable, self-undermining, subjective, non-unique, and ungrounded in argumentation theory.**

Also pragmatic concerns are not irrelevant under my interp – they are just lexically inferior to semantics. If two interps both accord with the text, then we can use standards like ground as the tiebreaker.

AT Leslie:

The Leslie evidence talks about syntax, not semantics, which means it’s totally irrelevant to the issue. **NEBEL[[9]](#footnote-9):** **Not quite, I think.** It's important to distinguish syntax from semantics. Leslie **is** say[s]**ing that** avariety of syntactic structures [i.e.] **(**bare plurals**, indefinite singulars, definite singulars)** can express generic generalizations **(**which is at the level of semantics**, or meaning). "The dog is a fascinating animal" or** "the tiger migrated from Asia in the third century" has a definite singular subject but is a generic generalization about the kind [of]**, dog or** tiger**;** you couldn't affirm it by specifying a particular dog or tiger. It means that although the res, if generic, could have been expressed with a singular subject **(as in Sept/Oct "a just society"),** you still can't spec.

Implications: a) your arguments are about sentence structure, not word meanings, which means they are not relevant to how we interpret just governments. b) your argument only means that the res could have been expressed with a singular subject, not that you can affirm its present phrasing with a specific-country plan.

AT jake nebel isn’t qualified:

1. turn: jake knows more about interpretation of debate resolutions than your authors do.

2. probably impossible to compare quals at this level – Jake is often published and a Rhodes Scholar, so intellect is probably a wash.

3. turn: Jake didn’t make this stuff up – the entirety of the article cites grammatical experts like Pargetter, Raz, Greenberg and Hershovitz in addition to debate-specific scholars on topicality.

AT pic ground:

1. Not responsive – that is a disad to PICs, not a disad to my interpretation. The legitimacy of that type of counterplan is entirely separate from the validity of my interp – it’s not offense since can have no spec and also no PICs.

2. turn: more PICs possible since I can PIC out of specific implementation mechanisms in specific countries, which you couldn’t provide if you defended all nations.

AT depth of education:

[game over – no education voter was read in this debate, which means you have no impact to any of your internal links and you prefer my fairness arguments].

1. no impact to depth – none of us are going to be involved in \_\_\_ in the rest of our lives. Also depth is impossible in 26 minutes of LD speeches anyway, which means broader knowledge comes first.

2. turn: Breadth of education o/w depth since we accumulate knowledge about the broader underlying issues across many places. Ensures we have the best understanding of wage policy in general, which is probably more useful to us as employees, employers, or voters than the hyper-specifics of an area. learning too much about one specific set of policies closes off understanding of the general nature of wage policies across a variety of circumstances, kills flexibility and educational diversity that’s probably also bad for any prospective policymaker.

3. Non-unique – you can read solvency evidence from specific regions as advantages to your aff – that’s basically what happens in the status quo. You get the specific scenario, you just need to defend all countries.

4. turn: encourages more depth since evidence that encompasses all nations or general trends is less common, which means we have to go more in depth on the statistics and comparison rather than just finding a new country to defend when people start responding to arguments. Econ education is uniquely critical since it’s a domain of policy that affects all of us as employer/employees.

5. topical version of the affirmative – you could have just […]

This outweighs:

a. You can read country specific evidence, you just need to apply it to all countries or argue why it would apply.

b. You can read a plan – you just can’t specify a country. Your plans good ev needs to justify why COUNTRY SPEC is uniquely valuable, not just generic “plan focus good”, because all my interp excludes is your ability to select a single country or subset of countries.

c. Outweighs your justifications – net benefits to country spec are outweighed by your inconsistency with semantical interps. Even if you’re right that theres some disad to debate as a whole under my interp, its irrelevant cuz the alternative is even worse.

Your education disads are also non-unique. Certain topics favor certain types of discussion, which means my standards o/w on specificity – even if your education is good, it’s not in this instance. **NEBEL[[10]](#footnote-10):** Second, my view is not that plans are bad. On the contrary, I think that plans are good, but only when they affirm the resolution. Whether some plan affirms their resolution (i.e., whether it is topical) is a function of the resolution’s semantics. To repeat, I have nothing against plans in general, and I believe that specification of some resolutional parameter may be permissible, if not obligatory, on many topics. One of the great things about LD is that our resolutions are diverse not only in their subject matter but also in their structure. This requires debaters to analyze each resolution with a fresh eye and not simply to import concepts and assumptions that may have applied to old resolutions into theoretical norms for each new one. But when the only tool you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail. It is easier to continue with the same assumptions, as long as they are sufficiently shared by one’s peers on the national circuit, rather than reinventing the theoretical wheel every two months. It is important to resist this temptation and not to ignore the meaning of the resolution, even and especially if you may be more comfortable debating a different resolution.

Also turns education because I promote different types of discussion about the meaning of words, which is something we’ll have to deal with as speakers of English.

Linguistic education is also more valuable than anything you reward by complaining about debate-specific problems. **NEBEL[[11]](#footnote-11):** Is Kupferbreg right that debate is its own autonomous context? This is a big question. Some assume that debate should be modeled on external activities in the real world, such as policymaking. Others argue that debate is a game with its own standards of success that need not be modeled on anything else. These views are not very precise, as stated. But we can make them clearer by focusing on the ballot’s question, “Who did the better debating?” Some believe that the standards for good debating are standards that we can straightforwardly apply from other contexts. Others believe that standards for good debating emerge from debate itself. I think the answer must be somewhere in the middle. Standards for good debating have to come from *somewhere* other than competitive academic debate, because debating exists outside of competitive academic debate. The components of good debating, including argumentation, communication, and strategy, have their own standards outside of this bubble. But competitive academic debate combines these components in a way that may result in a somewhat different set of standards. LD is not a simulation of or a training ground for any other specific activity beyond debate, such as law or philosophy. Nor is it an autonomous end-in-itself. Debate is a game, but the game is designed to test and reward certain skills that have purchase outside of the game itself. Analyzing the meaning of a text may be one such skill, and debaters can develop it via a semantic approach to topicality. Changing the topic by appealing to wish lists and hyperboles about ground loss is not such a skill.

breadth o/w depth:

Modern policymaking requires breadth. **CAMBRIDGE** explains the argument**[[12]](#footnote-12):** These differences matter, if society is in need of more broadly educated leaders and citizens. The case for breadth centres on the proposition that the greatest challenges facing the world today are of huge complexity and global scope, best tackled by people whose education enables them to integrate different fields of knowledge and work across conventional academic boundaries. To cope with the modern world, moreover, all citizens need to be broadly knowledgeable, numerate and computationally skilled as well as literate. A broad, flexible curriculum makes it easier to give students more choice, and greater responsibility for their own education.

AT topic is inherently specific:

1. We can just talk about implementation mechanisms and wage rates in multiple countries - even if they differ, that is just a nuance to the aff. The wage rates and policy specifics would differ in each country you defend, but that does not mean it’s no longer OK to talk about multiple countries and many such mechanisms.

2. Not a DA to my interp - you can focus on one nation via your aff offense even if you defend DAs to all countries.

AT normative aspiration:

Nebel controls the internal link - he says that the only way we could interpret just goverments ought to [..] as a normative aspiration, i.e. something existing governments should strive to achieve, would be if we interpeted as a generic statement; that’s the example of trespassers the card uses since normative generics do not presuppose the existence of just governments, but existential generics, which is your interpretation, do so. Nebel (2) indicates a generic interpretation means you cannot spec, so you are not going to win that argument since only my interpretation allows your intuitive conceptualization of just governments to even make sense.

semantic interp = democracy:

Endorsing NSDA’s resolution as states textually is key to endorse fair and democratic norms. **NEBEL[[13]](#footnote-13):** Another deontological argument might appeal to legitimate authority. The NSDA is the only entity with the legitimate authority to determine the topics. This process begins with a committee: anyone can sit in on the committee’s meetings and suggest topics on their website. The process ends with a democratic voting procedure. Some philosophers believe that democratic procedures generate obligations to obey rules. This would yield an obligation to debate the resolution as worded. And some philosophers believe that legitimate authorities can generate reasons that exclude (not merely outweigh) other considerations that would usually be relevant. In general, if your teachers instruct you to do something, then you don’t get to weigh up the reasons for or against it; you just have to do it.[3](http://vbriefly.com/2015/02/20/the-priority-of-resolutional-semantics-by-jake-nebel/#fn3) Similarly, although the fact that some proposition would be good to debate would usually be a reason to debate it, or a reason for the NSDA to propose it and for debaters to vote for it, that fact is irrelevant and no longer a reason if that proposition is not the chosen resolution.

AT multiactor fiat bad:

1) no impact – you defend more nations, and I get more ground to respond to them.

2) implementation mechanisms differing doesn’t mean the resolution is incoherent, it just means the specifics of your advocacy are complex and vary from location to location. You are missing an internal link.

3) no uniqueness since your interp doesn’t solve – there is multi-actor fiat in the 1AC.

1. Jake Nebel [Rhodes scholar and TOC semi-finalist – currently at Oxford and graduated from Princeton] “Jake Nebel on Specifying Just Governments.” http://vbriefly.com/2014/12/19/jake-nebel-on-specifying-just-governments/ [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [ibid] but article is entitled “The Priority of Resolutional Semantics.” 2/20/15 http://vbriefly.com/2015/02/20/the-priority-of-resolutional-semantics-by-jake-nebel/ [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. [ibid] [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. [ibid] [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. [ibid] [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. [ibid] [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. [ibid] [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. [ibid] but article is entitled “The Priority of Resolutional Semantics.” 2/20/15 http://vbriefly.com/2015/02/20/the-priority-of-resolutional-semantics-by-jake-nebel/ [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. [Facebook Chat, Screenshot: <http://cl.ly/Z3M9>. Jake Nebel, co-director of Victory Briefs, Philosophy and Marshall Scholar at Oxford University. Facebook Chat, December 19, 2014.] [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. [ibid] but article is entitled “The Priority of Resolutional Semantics.” 2/20/15 http://vbriefly.com/2015/02/20/the-priority-of-resolutional-semantics-by-jake-nebel/ [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. [ibid] [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. The Well-Educated Undergraduate Annual Address to the Regent House, 2 October 2006 <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/v-c/role/speeches/20061002.html> University of Cambridge. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. [ibid] [↑](#footnote-ref-13)